

# THE COLONIAL NEWSLETTER

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## OUR NEXT DECADE



This issue opens the second decade of THE COLONIAL NEWSLETTER. Our publication has managed to survive in spite of adversity and during these ten years has produced some 305 pages of letters, articles, photographs and concepts comprising a unique collection of modern writings on Colonial American Numismatics. Many of these have been outstanding in their numismatic content; many have been controversial - such as those by the late Everett T. Sipsey which were designed for the specific purpose of ".... getting people to think, and .... to help open minds closed by numismatic tradition." The cooperation and financial assistance of all of our Patrons during these ten years is sincerely appreciated by ye editor. Now, lets think about the future.

Our objectives for the next decade are the following:

1. The continuation of THE COLONIAL NEWSLETTER and our Association of Patrons.
2. Production of THE ANNOTATED COLONIAL NEWSLETTER. This will consist of an indexed loose-leaf bound version of all CNLs with update and cross reference data printed on the left hand (currently blank) pages. This will be the second phase of a program consisting initially of a CNL Workbook without the printed annotations.
3. Production of a set of CNL DATABOOK s by series, i.e. Connecticuts, New Jersey Coppers, Massachusetts Silver and Copper, Fugios, etc. etc. These will contain collected classic works, new manuscripts, and current photographic and descriptive data on varieties and rarity, and will be designed for periodic updating via inserts.

This is an ambitious program and will probably require the full ten years for implementation. Its completion will depend entirely on our Patron's cooperation and financial assistance. If, in fact - the past IS prologue, then it will be successful. Additional data on these objectives and concepts will be presented in future issues. Please let us know your thoughts and suggestions on these ideas.

JCS

# MISCELLANEOUS RUMBLINGS, RAMBLINGS AND REPORTS FROM THE EDITOR.

This issue has been delayed and we must apologize for the long interval between issues. Several problems converged simultaneously and were, for awhile, quite overwhelming in their impact on CNL.

The first was the delay in completion of several manuscripts we had planned for mid-year publication. These delays were probably fortunate because our printer had a fire that put him out of business for a number of months and had we received the manuscripts they probably would have been lost or damaged in the fire. Finally,

thesevere funding cutbacks in our National space and military programs has resulted in thousands of layoffs of technical and managemnt personnel associated with these programs, including ye editor. As a result, nothing constructive was accomplished with CNL during mid-1970 while the more pressing personal problems demanded attention. One by one these are being resolved and are, for the moment, well in hand. So --- to those who have written expressing their concern --- our thanks. All is not lost, merely temporarily misplaced!

Our objectives for the next ten years outlined on the frontispiece represent a program of considerable scope which, when completed, will bring together for the first time all of the significant writings and data regarding Colonial American Numismatics. A subject which is - at the moment - extremely fragmented and ridden with "numismatic tradition" as well as fact. The ways and means for accomplishing all of this are not yet established. Specific details based in part on our Patron's suggestions will be discussed in future issues, but the general approach is the following ..... each of the CNL DATABOOKs will consist, at a minimum, of a table of die varieties and combinations, rarity, and detailed (high quality) photographic plates for attribution purposes. To these will be added - as time passes - some collected classic works (reprinted to the CNL format), new manuscripts, etc. etc. The pages will probably be punched for binding in multi-ring notebooks. Each of the major series could fill a three inch binder, and we may have several volumes of miscellaneous material. New pages will be added, new discoveries illustrated and discussed, updated pages issued, etc., through CNL. It is anticipated that at least ten volumes will be required to properly cover the Colonial American coinages.

We are including in this issue the first section of one of the reprints to be included in the CNL DATABOOKs in a volume covering early introductory writings on Colonial American Numismatics. This is Chapter VI from W.C.Prime's famous Coins, Medals, and Seals published in 1861. This was one of the first books for the American coin collector, preceeding "Crosby" by fourteen years, and printed

in a day when there were but a few hundred collectors in this country. It is a book that sparked a great growth of interest in numismatics in the late 1800's. Chapter VI is Coin in America and is devoted primarily to the Colonial coinages. The plates associated with the chapter are presented in sequence as they are first mentioned in the text but are numbered so that when they are rearranged into the DATABOOK they will be grouped together following the text. We wanted to reprint the entire chapter and include it as a supplement to a single issue of CNL; however, several factors, primarily cost and preparation time made this impossible. We anticipate being able to complete the entire chapter in a maximum of four issues.

In a future issue we will make a few comments regarding the numerous replicas of the Colonial coinages that have appeared on the scene since 1967. For the moment we want to point out to our newer Patrons that almost every Colonial issue has been duplicated!. Most of these fakes are extremely deceptive. The STELL-VERMONTIS discussed as RF-18 in CNL, Serial No. 20 and subsequent issues, has been identified as one of these. Something must be done about this situation and we will discuss the results of some preliminary investigations in our next issue.

Again --- our apologies for the publication delay. We have always cautioned our Patrons that our publication schedule was irregular, but we did not intend for it to be this irregular!



JCS

## LETTERS and TECHNICAL NOTES

- ● from T.D. Howe  
Houston, Texas

I have not seen a rarity scale for the Fugio Cents of 1787 and it seems that such a listing would be of interest to our CNL Patrons. Also - what happened to Vlack's listing of "The Voce Populi Coinage" which the New Netherlands Catalogue of its December 1968 sale said "we anticipate that it will soon be available to collectors, possibly through the medium of the CNL"?

- Editor's note: Bob Vlack has advised us that he has a bit more work to do on the VOCE POPULI and it will be ready soon. Ye editor is working on a new rarity tabulation of the Fugios and hopes to have it ready for the next issue. It will include a variety listing with rarity for both normal and upset reverses and comments on specimens having spectacular multiple strikes.

## MASSACHUSETTS HALF CENT, Ryder 5-A, OBVERSE DIE BREAKS (TN-24)

● ● from Richard Picker

Albertson, New York

Shown in the photographs below are two Massachusetts Half Cents. Both are Ryder 5-A, one of the commonest varieties, if not the commonest. The specimen with the reverse break (the upper photograph) is pretty scarce, but the specimen in the lower photograph is something that has not been previously known -- at least, I have never before seen or heard of one with any hint of obverse breaks. This is even more unusual when you consider the extent of these breaks. You would think that intermediate die states would have turned up. Of course it is possible that they exist but have never been mentioned. Since Ryder designated the dies as 5-A we would normally designate this new one with obverse and reverse breaks as Ryder 5a-Aa.



5-Aa



5a-Aa



The Fourth SIX over TWELVE specimen.

(TN-25)

● ● from William J. Wild & ye Editor.

The enlarged photograph below is the fourth specimen to be discovered of a Massachusetts Sixpence (Noe 21) overstruck on a cut down Oak Tree Shilling (Noe 14) - the "Spiney Tree". The three previous specimens were described in the July 1969 and March 1970 issues of CNL.



This new specimen was a part of the Massachusetts Historical Society Collection and was offered as Lot #12 in Stack's October 23,24, 1970 public auction sale where it brought a winning bid of \$ 300.00. We are indebted to Mr. James C. Risk of Coin Galleries, and Stack's, for the use of the photograph.

Like the third discovery piece, the Bressett specimen, this new specimen is struck obverse over reverse of the undertype shilling, and conversely for the other side. The first two specimens are of the opposite juxtaposition. Key portions of the undertype that are visible are, on the reverse - just to the left of the date at the edge are SET, that is, all of the S, most of the E, and the bottom portion of the T. On the obverse at the border between 1 and 3 o'clock positions are the lower half of the letters NEW followed by faint traces of the EN of ENGLAND. On both sides 8 or 9 dots of the inner beaded border on the shilling are visible.

On the next page we have listed in a table the pertinent facts regarding the four known SIX over TWELVE specimens. Hopefully we will be able to obtain the weight of this fourth specimen from its new owner who at the moment is unknown to us. We assume that it is probably heavier than the Bressett specimen, because of the large hole, but lighter than numbers 1 or 2. This suggests its probable weight to be around 32.3 grains.

No.	Discovered by	Owner pedigree	Overstrike Juxtaposition	Weight in gr.	Remarks
1.	W.H.Breen	Bullowa-Wild	Obv/Obv	33.7	
2.	J.J.Ford	Brand-Wild	Obv/Obv	32.5	
3.	K.Bressett	Bressett	Obv/Rev	31.9	holed, graffitti on obv. Oct 14th 1857 rev. JHH
4.	R.Picker	MHS -	Obv/Rev	?	holed

Bill Wild will appreciate any information regarding additional discoveries of this remarkable Massachusetts Sixpence/Shilling overstrike. It is really amazing that such specimens could go without being recognized for more than three hundred years, and then within a period of several years four of them appear. It is quite reasonable to assume that there are others and we urge our patrons to carefully examine all specimens to which they have access. With the discovery of additional specimens enough clues may be recognized to determine the circumstances responsible for these unique products of mintmaster John Hull.



● ● from Robert I. Hinkley, M.D.  
New Hampshire

I recently was fortunate enough to acquire a hoard of Vermont Coppers and thought our Patrons might be interested in learning about this find. The set which consists of twenty-one varieties was assembled and attributed to Ryder in 1914 and was retained by the collector's son (an old Vermont family) until the summer of 1970.

Important specimens in the collection are an EF Ryder #4, VF R-9, EF R-22, EF R-31, and a VF R-36. Interestingly, the R-36 was labelled R-26 as apparently the R-36 was unknown at that time (in 1914). The other varieties are mostly fine or better. I am collecting Vermont Coppers by die variety and would like to correspond with other specialists in the Vermonts.

Editor's note: Those who would care to write to Dr. Hinkley may address him in care of CNL and we will forward your letters to him.

## A GETZ/BIRCH WHATSIT ?

(TN-26)

● ● from Richard F. Buckley  
Medford, Massachusetts

The enlarged photograph is of a specimen recently offered to me and on which I have done considerable research. It is allegedly a Getz Half Dollar obverse muled with a Birch Cent reverse, an unreported and unlikely although not impossible combination. The material is apparently pewter or some other base metal, also not impossible as the Birch Cent is known in pewter.



The piece shows some signs of being a cast, particularly on the reverse. There appears to be a slight trace of granulation around the fraction and the ribbon ends. Also, the lettering appears to be just a little too broad; however, it certainly has the die characteristics of the original suggesting that if it is a copy, a genuine Birch Cent was the original model. There is no sign of a seam, a casting port, or any evidence of tooling, rubbing or filing.

The Getz obverse has a considerably more genuine appearance. The surfaces are smoother and the legends and devices more convincing. Note the die break from the base of the bust through 7 in the date to the rim, and the second large break from the head between P and R to the rim. I have checked a number of Getz plates but cannot find a specimen with these characteristics. If it is a fake it certainly is copied from an original, so where is the Getz specimen with these die breaks ?

Hopefully one of our CNL patrons can shed some light on this puzzle for me. Does anyone know of another specimen, or the source of this one ? Where is a Getz specimen with these die breaks ? I have talked with several knowledgeable people about this specimen and in general they concur with my observations but their reasoning seems to be based on tradition and sentiment rather than logical proof. Just because one has not seen something before certainly does not serve as proof that it does not exist !

● ● from Herbert A. Silberman  
Maplewood, New Jersey

(TN-27)

The word "cent" that appears on our coins has no apparent history prior to the Massachusetts Act of August 8, 1786, which authorized "cents and halfcents". The colonial leaders, well versed in classic studies, chose for some reason to anglicize the "centine" "centum" or "centavos" into "cent". In 1787 the National Congress authorized the minting of copper coins (Fugio), but made no reference to "cents", although in 1785 Congress had adopted the dollar as a monetary unit and the Act of April 1792 provided that one of the denominations would be cents or a hundredth part of a dollar. To my knowledge the only earlier use of "cent" was on a Canadian token and this was an abbreviation.

If anyone has any records on how the word "cent" was selected, or any earlier use of the word is known, I would like to learn about them.



● ● from Donald W. Norton  
Berlin, New Hampshire

(TN-28)

I would like to bring up for discussion among the CNL Patrons whether or not the coin now known as Connecticut Miller 1-I of 1788 might also officially be designated as Vermont Ryder 39 of 1788. This is not a new idea, however, as Mr. Bressett, in his plates for the Vermont series, includes same as his BB-111. The obverse is known with two Connecticut listings - 1.1 of 1787 and 1 of 1788, and the reverse is combined with three different Vermont obverses (24/25 & 26; 28/33; and 29). This reverse also is muled with a counterfeit halfpence obverse, (Vermont Ryder 31 or Connecticut Miller 100).

Therefore, while a Connecticut die was used for the obverse, the reverse was used for four different Vermont varieties, (Ryder 25, 28, 29 and 31). Furthermore, the coin itself was not actually struck in either State but at the Machins Mills mint in Newburgh, New York.

If Connecticut Miller 100-I of 1788 can also be called Vermont Ryder 31, then who can object to Connecticut Miller 1-I of 1788 being also known as Vermont Ryder 39 ?

Editor's note: For those who may have trouble following Mr. Norton's condensed discussion of the Vermont-Connecticut pairings, Mr. Edward R. Barnsley in Serial N. 11 of CNL, presented a die interlock chart that will aid in visualizing Mr. Norton's ideas. This chart is on page 49 (Serial No. 11, March 1964) and shows all Connecticut dies interlocked with Vermont dies.